



First Time in Forever

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Windswept, isolated and ruggedly beautiful, Puffin Island is a haven for day-trippers and daydreamers alike. But this charming community has a way of bringing people together in the most unexpected ways...

It's been a summer of firsts for Emily Donovan. From becoming a stand-in mom to her niece Lizzie to arriving on Puffin Island, her life has become virtually unrecognizable. Between desperately safeguarding Lizzie and her overwhelming fear of the ocean—which surrounds her everywhere she goes!—Emily has lost count of the number of "just breathe" pep talks she's given herself. And that's before charismatic local yacht club owner Ryan Cooper kisses her...

Ryan knows all about secrets. And it's clear that newcomer Emily—with her haunted eyes and the little girl she won't let out of her sight—is hiding from something besides the crazy chemistry between them. So Ryan decides he's going to make it his personal mission to help her unwind and enjoy the sparks! But can Puffin Island work its magic on Emily and get her to take the biggest leap of trust of all—putting her heart in someone else's hands?

First Time in Forever Details

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From Reader Review First Time in Forever for online ebook

KatLynne says

Great start to this series! Well written, witty banter, lovely small town coastal setting, and charismatic, sexy hero. Looking forward to the next installment!

Jenn - Reviews says

This is a reread. What a beautiful story! Touching, just beautifully written.

Emily, our heroine, has just had a massive life changing experience and she will never be the same again. She is strong but oh so vulnerable. Having been made the guardian of a six year old child whom she's never met and having to all of a sudden be a parent figure is difficult enough. Moving to a place where her biggest phobia exists just makes it even more difficult.

Enter Ryan, our hero - caring, loving, supportive and a sexy sexy man. To top it off he's great with kids! Sarah Morgan is a fabulous author and I very much enjoyed First Time In Forever. I am thrilled that Sarah now writes full length novels as it brings me so much joy knowing I have great reading to look forward to every day.

Jacob Proffitt says

This was okay, and I liked it a whole more in the end than in the beginning. Most of the beginning felt contrived. It didn't help that some things came across as manipulative on the part of the author.

Emily is one of those heroines the author expects us to believe has been essentially the same her entire life. She suffered an early trauma and that has supposedly affected her entire life until now. There are a few reasons that doesn't work. First, nobody is entirely the same her entire life. Adolescents don't stay the same for even months. Sure, basic personality remains more or less constant (though hormones mess with even that baseline), but something brought about by childhood trauma requires a good deal of reinforcement to remain even through childhood. Second, if you *are* going to try to establish this difficulty to attach to others, then you probably shouldn't base your entire series on three friends who would do anything for each other. The whole time Emily is going on about her refusal to love (and no that isn't a spoiler as this comes up really early), she's also relying on that friendship that is the very definition of love and dependence and support.

To add to the sense of artificiality, Morgan also gives us an extreme case of insta-lust. Emily and Ryan are panting after each other from first sight. While this isn't as bad as insta-love, it still feels like the author manipulating the story so that the tension comes between this insta-lust and then a pile of things "keeping them apart". This fed into my disbelief in Emily's trauma such that I felt the whole thing manufactured.

All of that makes this seem like I hated it more than I did. Part of it is saved by being attached to Lizzie, the child thrust upon Emily by cruel fate. Morgan has a talent for making the child engaging and an organic part of the story such that I attached pretty early and deeply. Indeed, my warming to Ryan at all was due to his engagement with Lizzie as she brings out his caring nature. I was a little surprised to find myself attached to

him before I finally warmed to Emily, frankly. That's because his character has his own batch of manufactured-feeling hang-ups as well. I kept waiting for someone to point out that his aversion to children was a huge slap in the face to his sister (long, spoilery story) and a huge betrayal for all that she meant to him. Nobody ever did.

And there I am griping again. The amazing thing is honest tears wrenched from me (the happy kind) as Emily began overcoming her past and learning to let others in. Even though I can't buy the background "cause" of her issues, Morgan does a great job making them feel real and present in their current manifestation. And she does an even better job showing Emily overcome piece by piece as she finds the peace and support that she needs in Puffin Island. The final coming together of Emily and Ryan felt rushed, but I can forgive that in the face of all the other great developments and progress.

If I hadn't felt so disconnected by what felt like manipulation up front, this would probably be a clear four stars. As it is, it's a solid three and an acknowledgement that it may be my own personal quirks that kept me from fully enjoying the setup. And while I might not have bought the background, the foreground was a fun story with a strong setting that I look forward to entering in later books of the series.

A note about Steamy: Surprisingly low, actually. It's the high end of low, but still. One explicit sex scene and one explicit, uh, not *quite* sex scene and some minor fooling around in between. With the insta-lust, I expected more and was gratified it was as restrained as it was—mostly because the story didn't need any more than it got so the explicit bits were well embedded into the story and I always appreciate that.

Claire Robinson says

4 - "Feelings are the hardest thing in life to control." Stars!

I am starting to get a little author crush on Sarah Morgan, I fell in love with her writing style and easy going story telling after reading her 2014 novel *Maybe The Christmas*, so when the opportunity presented itself to read the first book in her new *Puffin Island* series, it was a total no-brainer.

First Time in Forever is the perfect beginning, three friends

Emily, Brittany and Skylar have used Brittany's grandmothers beach home *Castaway Cottage* over the years and for each of them it has become something of a refuge, all for their own reasons, and each of them have their own stories as to why. This book is Emily's, and the story is wholly her own, but it also sets the scene, introduces the islanders and gives you the background for everything else along the way.

Ryan Cooper has spent a large part of his life being responsible for others, he isn't interested in taking that role on anymore, life is his for the living, and no responsibilities, attachments or expectations are wanted in the mix anymore. That is until Emily arrives on the Island, with a young child in tow, he can sense her unease, her emotional detachment and her overall fear of the whole situation she is in, and the honorable man in him wants to help, it doesn't hurt that he is sex-on-a-stick hot, charming to a fault and gets along with pretty much everyone he crosses paths with.

"I see you Emily Donovan. I'm standing here, looking right at you, so you can damn well stop hiding."

This is one of those books I just get absorbed in, I loved the main story, I loved all the little side stories that ran through it as well, you are literally getting to know the Island and its inhabitants as Emily and Ryan work out what they actually want from each other.

A brilliant start to what I expect is going to be an extremely memorable series. Brittany and Zach are reunited on the Island in the next book in the series; *Some Kind of Wonderful* which is due in July 2015, so not too long for this eager reader to wait!

ARC generously provided via Netgalley, it was my pleasure to provide the above honest review.

Ami says

I really loved Sarah Morgan's previous romance-trilogy, so I was excited when I read that she would be releasing another trilogy this year. And it would be set on an island!! Small-town romance is my favorite kind of romance, and I love a story that is situated on an island because it makes the community-vibe stronger.

So how did this one go?

Well, I was absolutely LOVING it as well!!

In the beginning, I didn't know whether I could warm up to Emily. Emily discovered that she has become a guardian for her 6-year-old niece and she didn't know if she could handle the responsibility. She didn't know if she could provide the love and emotional attachment that the kid needed – her ex-boyfriend accused her of being cold and unfeeling. Worse, she came to Puffin Island in order to protect Lizzy from intrusive paparazzo, but she is terrified of sea! So Emily in that first few chapters for me felt a little bit of a mess. Which is weird, because I would be seriously freaked out if I was in her position too!! I can't see myself taking care of a child – I definitely don't have that 'motherly' vibe. So maybe I was projecting myself in Emily, and I knew it would be hard for one to warm up to me as well.

But as the story went along, I became very proud of Emily. Despite the fact that she kept saying that she didn't know what to do with Lizzy, it was clear that she wanted her niece to be safe and sound. Emily could be a tiger in protecting Lizzy and she was willing to overcome her fear to make sure that Lizzy got the best childhood experience. That made me admire her so much!!

There was a reason why Emily became as distant as she was – and I was glad that her secret was revealed in the middle of the book. One thing I dislike from romance is when the hero or heroine keeps a secret that drags along until almost the final chapter. It didn't happen here which made me very happy. Instead, the reveal helped Emily to move forward and to heal and to embrace being Lizzy's one and only family. There was one very significant moment between Emily and Lizzy that made me all teary eyed – right there on a public train (that I use for commuting to work).

Now, Ryan, gosh I loved him too! What can I say, when a hero is being sweet to kids and very good with them, I just melt. Ryan was really great with Lizzy (and Emily too!); despite him refusing to be in a committed relationship because he said that he wanted his freedom, it was clear that family kept him grounded. So I loved that he finally recognized his shortcomings.

All in all, this was a VERY GREAT start of a series. I loved the feel of the tight-knit community and the secondary characters that rounded up the town. I seriously can't WAIT to read about Brittany and her ex-husband, Zach, in the second book. I mean, second-chance romance, people!! That is like, my kryptonite!

A Guest Review for The Blogger Girls

The ARC is provided by the publisher for an exchange of fair and honest review. No high rating is required for any ARC received.

Mo says

A sweet read but it didn't WOW me. Will I continue with the series. Probably.

My previous book was a HUGE 5 stars so it is hard to read one after that.

Sex scenes were quite hot.

Cora Tea Party Princess says

5 Words: Fame, family, love, relationships, island.

How does Sarah Morgan do it? How does she manage to take you away to these perfect places? I'd already fallen in love with Snow Crystal with her last series, and with this new one, I am so in love with Puffin Island.

This was a fantastic read, a perfect escape.

Emily is a fantastic character, and I loved how she changed as you read. The further the story progressed, the more she grew up and discovered who she was. I loved the tension and the attraction, how when Ryan and Emily collided it was breath taking.

The island community is pretty awesome, and makes for a few smiles and giggles. It's a small place and seemingly everyone knows everyone else, and they all have each other's backs.

This is a pretty magical story that reminds you of the importance of family, whether they be your relations by blood or your best friends.

I received a copy of this for free via NetGalley for review purposes.

Katie says

[I think the brother might be Lisa's lost love, though. (hide spoiler)]

Jess says

Review posted: Happily Ever After - Reads

Blog rating: C-

If you've read any of my past reviews, you'll already know I'm a sucker when it comes to sweet small town, or island in this case, stories, and that's what we get with this new Puffin Island series. Ryan, a former journalist, moved back to the island after a tragic accident while he was on assignment. He was injured and the accident killed his friend and co-worker. After a childhood cut short by his parent's deaths, he was forced to grow up fast to help his Grandmother care for his three younger siblings. All of these experiences has led him to vow to live the single life up and Ryan just doesn't see a future of marriage and kids as being the thing for him.

Emily is hiding out from the press after taking over as guardian for her 6 year old niece, a little girl she met for the first time after Emily's famous half-sister was killed. The press is out to get the story and Emily wants to hide with Lizzy and protect her from any and everything. This fierce, overprotective desire comes from a tragic accident in Emily's past (the hero and heroine both were dealt some bad past blows!) that's left her terrified of the sea and reluctant to form any close relationships. Initially, she keeps Lizzy at arms length, but that doesn't last long and she ends up falling in love with this sweet little girl who never really knew her mom and just wants a safe place to live.

I enjoyed the setup for this series and I love the small town feel. I really liked getting to know Emily and learning more about her two best friends. Same with Ryan, we meet some of his friends and his sister, and all I kept thinking was, yes, more characters for future books! The island setting, the people, the charm, it's all there and I liked it all as the backdrop for Emily and Ryan's story.

Where the book lost me a bit was unfortunately Emily and Ryan. Their romance just didn't do it for me. For much of the book, Ryan has no interest in any type of relationship. Not one with Emily and not one with Lizzy and even as he's obviously getting closer to them, he still insists that it's nothing more than a good time. So by the time the story started to wrap up, it felt like Ryan's feelings did a really fast 180 and it wasn't enough for me to buy it.

The steamy factor was absent. Sure, Ryan and Emily have some good times, I just wanted more. More sex,

more kissing, more romance, it read overall a bit vanilla. Had there been more romance between them, then maybe I could have gotten on board with believing in their relationship.

I'll be coming back to Puffin Island. I'm intrigued by the characters (lots of single characters, some with shared histories) and interested to see their stories play out. But I was ultimately let down by Ryan and Emily. It's a nice story with that small island charm, but a very weak romance and that wasn't a great balance.

Nicola says

4.5 stars.

You're going to love Puffin Island."

Couldn't put it better myself. Onto the next!

? Kimberly says

Coffee dates with First Time in Forever

First date: We meet Emily and Lizzie her niece as they make their way on the ferry to Puffin Island. Emily has an overwhelming fear of water and is very unsure of her new role as Emily's stand-in Mom. Morgan allowed me to connect to both of them and I am anxious to see what develops. Enter Ryan Cooper. He owes Brit a favor and when she asks him to check in on her friend staying at the Castaway Cottage he agrees. She isn't his type and the kid should be an instant warning but he cannot help getting involved. She is frightened by Ryan and yet drawn to him.

Second date: Ryan instinctively knows Emily is hiding something but there is no denying the chemistry between them. It was fun unraveling their secrets and getting to know the characters, the island and the town folks. Emily kept folks at arm's length but here on the island she is finding it hard, especially with Ryan who awakens things in her. Morgan takes time to flesh out the characters, sharing their backstory and giving the reader a sense of what makes them tick. She allowed me to connect and become caught-up in their story. Lizzie is adorable and I dare you not to fall for her. From Ryan's grandmother to the ice cream shop Morgan brings the island to life. Skylar one of Emily's best friends visits and we see some chemistry between her and Ryan's friends. When and if these two tango it should be delicious. Skylar has a tendency to speak her mind and the banter was hilarious. Morgan also hinted at what direction Brit's story will take and it looks like a second chance romance.

Third date: Watching Ryan and Emily tango gave me the warm fuzzes. The island is transforming Emily and she is slowly breaking out of her shell. The romance developed slowly and was not without obstacles as each realizes what they wanted is not what they need at all. Danger, a fright and a little angst surround our final date but it was not overly done. A meddling grandma and townsfolk added to the charm and endeared me to the island.

Terri Wino says

I enjoyed this book, but it didn't grip me quite as much as some of Sarah Morgan's others. I had a difficult time getting invested in both Emily and Ryan's characters, but little Lizzy had me from the beginning (even though sometimes she felt more like an adult character the way she was written, especially in some of the conversations/dialogue). Though it took me until half way through the book to start rooting for Emily and Ryan's relationship, the setting and other characters in the book kept my interest throughout. I'm looking forward to book two and three in this series.

Josiemaus85 says

Feine, kleine Sommerlektüre für Zwischendurch ??

Geri Reads says

It's no secret that I love Sarah Morgan's books. I love her author voice and her characters always do it for me. While I liked First Time in Forever, I didn't love it. It lacked a certain 'omph' factor for me.

Emily is hiding out in Puffin Island with her niece Lizzy after her famous half-sister died in a plane crash. Ryan is a former journalist who lives on the island. They're attracted to each other but because of their individual baggage, can't commit to a long term relationship. So they dance around their attraction and then some.

I have no problem with that type of premise at all. But my issue with this book was I didn't feel the chemistry between Ryan and Emily. Their connection felt forced to me. And it doesn't help that I found Emily too timid and too suspicious for my taste. I get it. She has a reason to be but she frustrated me a bit. Ryan also tried my patience. He keeps saying he doesn't want that kind of relationship but he goes out of his way to get close to Emily and Lizzy.

I still enjoyed this one enough to continue with this series. I'm really looking forward to Alec and Skylar's story.

ARC provided by Harlequin via Edelweiss for an honest review.

Jess says

I LIKED this. I'm not entirely sure why since in theory it contains something I don't like (someone rearranging their life plan for someone else, though it's not in the usual way that bothers me, so maybe I don't not like this particular iteration of it) but I was just super into it. I liked the wooing. I liked the foreplay. I liked the non-plot moppet. I LOVE the set up for the other two books in the trilogy.

I just really, really liked this on the day I read it. And I can't ask for more than that.
